

Leading through Transition

Leading Change Conference

Ellen Hewett – National College Transition Network
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Welcome & Introductions



Approach

- ▶ Connecting the dots.
- ▶ Validating and strengthening your leadership skills.
- ▶ Offering concepts that may be useful during this time of change/transition.
- ▶ Providing opportunity for dialogue and applying ideas.
- ▶ Sharing resources to support your work.

Assumptions

- ▶ There is a tension between one's management and leadership responsibilities.
- ▶ Forces tend to push more attention to management needs.
- ▶ There are times when one needs to exert more leadership and times when one needs to exert more management.
- ▶ During times of change/transition leadership is key.

Learning Goals

- ▶ Identify the stages of change in the transition process
- ▶ Determine practical strategies for transitioning through current changes
- ▶ Assess leadership skills and fortify one's abilities for increased effectiveness in the current environment of change
- ▶ Develop a partnership framework, and determine the best approach to build new and existing partnerships
- ▶ Apply the key practices of collaborative leadership

Change and Transition

- ▶ Change is not the same as transition.
- ▶ Change is situational.
- ▶ Transition is the process we go through to come to terms with the new situation.
- ▶ Change focuses on the outcome of what the change will produce.
- ▶ Transition is different.

Transition – Starts with an Ending

- ▶ Starting point for transition is not the outcome but the ending that you will have to make to leave that “old” situation.
- ▶ Understanding that transition begins with letting go of something is the first step in transition leadership.
- ▶ Undermining force to organizational change is the failure to think through who will have to let go of what when the change occurs.

After Letting Go -> Neutral Zone

- ▶ Neutral zone is a time when the old way is gone and the new does not feel comfortable yet.
- ▶ Need to respect, expect, and understand this time.
- ▶ We generally rush through this phase or try to escape (high level of turn over).
- ▶ Best chance for renewal and creativity.
- ▶ Chaos is experienced.

New Beginning

- ▶ New beginnings are made only if we have first made an ending and spent time in the neutral zone.

Letting go...

- ▶ Identify who is losing what.
- ▶ Accept the reality and importance of losses.
- ▶ Acknowledge losses.
- ▶ Expect/accept signs of grieving.
- ▶ Give people information, again and again.
- ▶ Define what's over and what is not.
- ▶ Mark the endings.
- ▶ Treat past with respect.
- ▶ Show how endings ensure continuity with what really matters.

Leading through the Neutral Zone

- ▶ It is a time of reorientation and redefinition.
- ▶ Important to recognize that it is natural to feel confused during this time.
- ▶ Ambiguity increases, and longing for answers.
- ▶ Time of increased turnover.
- ▶ **IMPORTANT** to rebuild a sense of program identification and connectedness.

Key Neutral Zone Questions

- ▶ How can I make the interim between the old a time during which the program and everyone's place is enhanced?
- ▶ How can we come out of this time better than we were before the transition started?
- ▶ What are ways staff can manage the neutral zone as we transition to the new beginning?

Take a minute to consider these questions, then discuss them with a partner.

New Beginning

- ▶ Beginnings are different than starts.
- ▶ Starts take place on a schedule. Involve new situations.
- ▶ Beginnings involve new understandings, attitudes, identities, etc.
- ▶ Beginnings are the time to make a new commitment.
- ▶ Challenge: establishes the ending was real.

Where is your program now?

- Ending
- Neutral Zone
- New Beginning



Strategies

- Listen and Communicate
- Support and Guide
- Celebrate and Commit



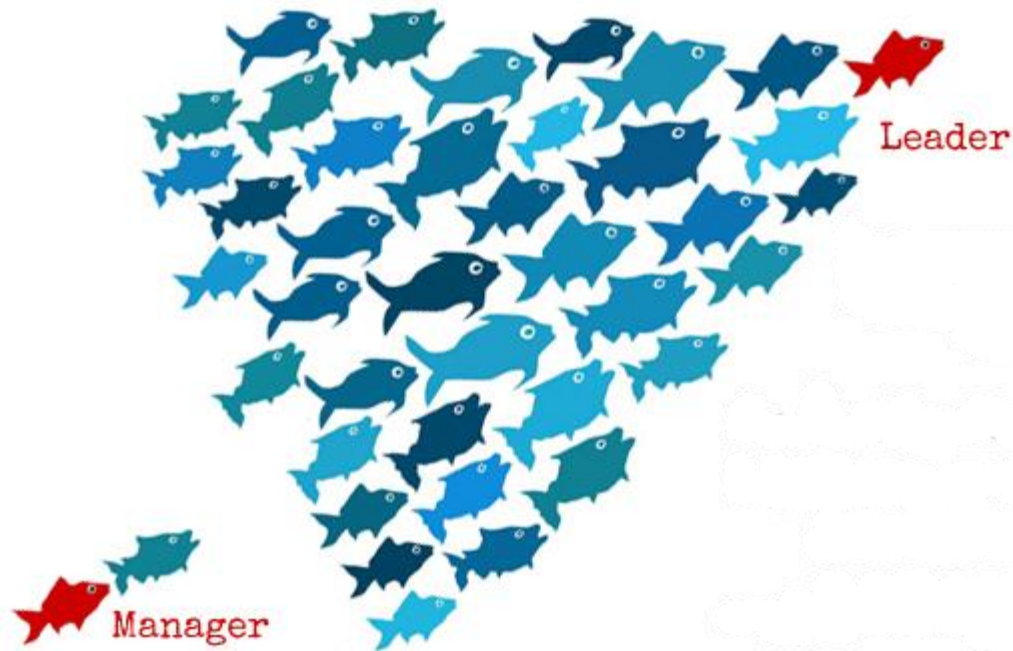
Activity



Reflection in Small Groups

- ▶ Does this information about transition processes explain current dynamics in your program? Explain.
- ▶ How might this approach of leading through transitions change your current approach to change?

Leadership and Management



Leadership and Management



A manager
is someone who:

- Plans and budgets;
- Organizes and allocates resources;
- Controls and solves problems;
- Directs people.



A leader
is someone who:

- Shares a vision;
- Aligns and influences;
- Guides direction;
- Motivates and inspires.

Effective Program Leadership



Key Elements of Collaboration

- Best understood as a process
- New leadership styles and structures
- High levels of reciprocal investment, focus, trust commitment and joint ownership
- Skill, planning, and time is needed to develop collaboration
- Leaders distribute power, authority, and responsibility across the system
- Communication is VITAL

Collaborative Leadership

Skills

Conflict management

Developing trust

Communication

Decision-making

Creating safety

Capacities

Uncertainty

Taking perspective

Self-reflection

Ego control

Effective Core Practices

- ▶ Self-reflection
- ▶ Building trust
- ▶ Developing staff
- ▶ Assessing the environment
- ▶ Creating clarity
- ▶ Sharing power and influence

Assessing the Environment

- Identify the issue/challenge (e.g., determining program capacity and readiness to implement and sustain policy and/or practice change)
- Identify the stakeholders
- Assess the extent of stakeholder engagement
- Evaluate community's readiness and capacity
- Identify where and how to start

Creating a Shared Vision

- Build clarity about goals, direction, approach and envisioned future among all stakeholders.
- Establish common ground to build commitment by sharing power and influence.



Sharing Power and Influence

It is critical to build a commitment to building alignment and capacity to maximize the expertise, information, and the decision-making authority across the organizations.



Activity



Knowledge, Attitudes and Skills

- ▶ **Knowledge:** The information and understanding necessary to perform one's role
- ▶ **Skills:** The practical, hands-on abilities needed
- ▶ **Attitudes:** The opinions, values, and beliefs associated with being effective

KAS Exercise – 10 minutes

- ▶ Form into groups of 3–5.
- ▶ Brainstorm – What are the optimal set of knowledge, attitudes and skills needed to effectively do your job?
- ▶ Use a sheet of paper and divide into 3 columns: Knowledge – Skills – Attitudes.
- ▶ Complete columns based on brainstorm content.

Partnerships: A Workforce Development Practitioner's Guide

- ▶ Tool for individuals working in or seeking to develop a partnership.
- ▶ While the examples are from workforce development, the checklists, tools, and templates may be applied to various situations – including adult education.

What do we mean by partnerships?

- ▶ Coming together of multiple organizations to recognize and pursue shared interests.
- ▶ Three models
 - Inner and outer rings
 - Full partnership
 - Hub and spoke

Models

- ▶ **Inner and Outer:** Small core group meets frequently for decision-making. This small group meets less frequently with larger partnership for input.
- ▶ **Full Partnerships:** Partners play a more or less equal role & meet on a regular basis. Decisions are made across partner organizations.
- ▶ **Hub and Spoke:** Focus of arrangement on the development of relationships between the lead agency and other partners. Emphasis is on program design/operations, and less on relationships.

Questions to consider...

- ▶ What is your preferred model of partnerships? Why?
- ▶ Determine which model your partnerships tend to take?

Structure is influenced by the goals of the partnership, nature of the work, and number or organizations involved.

Key Elements

- ▶ Establishing partnership
- ▶ Leadership, management, and coordination
- ▶ Processes of partnership
- ▶ Sustaining partnerships

Successful partnerships share in both investment of resources and rewards or benefits of partnering, and where partners have mutual trust.

Reflection



Personal Assessment

- ▶ Review the KAS sheet developed by your group. Consider your own strengths and areas to build.
- ▶ What are ways that you can validate your strengths and cultivate new ones?
- ▶ What can you do tomorrow to start this development process? Next month? This year?

Partnership Framework

- ▶ Development of a partnership is dynamic and takes time.
- ▶ Process of organizations coming together for a shared purpose, establish effective ways of working together and share resources for agreed upon common goal informs the **Phases of Activity** framework.
- ▶ Other frameworks focus on other aspects, e.g., the integration of leadership.

Phases of Activity

- ▶ **Form and Focus** – point of coming together for a shared purpose and interest.
- ▶ **Organize and Act** – time to develop structure and plans.
- ▶ **Achieve and Transform** – time of institutionalization, sustainability and systems change.

Questions to Consider

- ▶ What is prompting (or did prompt) the establishment of the partnership?
- ▶ What was the trigger?
- ▶ What is important in the building and sustaining of a partnership?
- ▶ What form does the commitment among partners take? How formal is it?

SWOT Analysis



SWOT

SWOT is a simple and comprehensive way to assessing the forces within and without your program.

SWOT reminds us to:

- ❑ Build on strengths
- ❑ Minimize weaknesses
- ❑ Seize opportunities
- ❑ Counteract threats

Closing



Thank you!

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